

REMARKS

Claims 4-6 and 16-20 are presented for examination, of which claims 4 and 6 are independent. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge Examiner's conclusion that claims 4-6 and 16-20 appear to comprise allowable subject matter.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 and 7-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,121,860 (Tsutsumi). As shown above, claims 1-3 and 7-15 have been cancelled, and as such, this rejection is now moot.

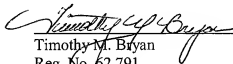
It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Please charge any additional fees, not already covered by check, or credit any overpayment, to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 14219-0107US1.

Respectfully submitted,

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Timothy M. Bryan
Reg. No. 62,791

Fish & Richardson P.C.
225 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110
Telephone: (617) 542-5070
Facsimile: (877) 769-7945